

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Weather Hat Co

South Dakota Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Streamlining Production Decreases Lead Time at Weather Hat Co.

Client Profile:

Weather Hat Co. has specialized in the creation of custom hats since 2001. Located in Belle Fourche, South Dakota, Weather Hat Co. has a wide range of customers across the country. The company produces everything from period style hats and fedoras to western hats and dress hats. Weather Hat Co. currently employs 5 people, including co-owners Jack and Jennifer Scholl.

Situation:

Weather Hat Co. was a new business with limited human resources as well as a new entrant in the hat industry; thus, the company had minimal daily production potential. To achieve higher quantity production without giving away the unique skill set of the owners, Weather Hat Co. sought assistance from the South Dakota Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Dakota MEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate.

Solution:

Dakota MEP helped the Weather Hat Co. define low level and high level hat production skills. Employees were hired and trained in low level skill production to decrease the owners' daily workload and increase throughput. Dakota MEP was successful in streamlining production at Weather Hat Co., decreasing lead time and enabling quality products to be completed on time.

Results:

- * Increased throughput by 30 to 40 percent.
- * Decreased lead time from 20 weeks to 12 weeks.
- * Hired and trained new employees in low level production skills.
- * Improved quality of product.

Testimonial:

"Dakota MEP gave us the ability to realize what we did not have time to do as owners. I highly recommend Dakota MEP to any small business owners looking to grow their businesses."

Jennifer Scholl, Co-owner